

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02668 151336Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01
TRSE-00 /051 W

-----151339Z 090140 /44

O R 151305Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5737
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, IS
SUBJECT: RABIN TO GO ON LEAVE

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 2554, (B) TEL AVIV 2611

1. PRIME MINISTER RABIN HAS NOW DECIDED TO GO ON LEAVE AND TO RECOMMEND THAT DEFENSE MINISTER PERES CARRY OUT THE FUNCTIONS OF PRIME MINISTER. RABIN WILL LEAVE AFTER INDEPENDENCE DAY (APRIL 21) AND WILL REMAIN ON LEAVE UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION ON MAY 17. HE REACHED HIS DECISION FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH PERES, FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, JUSTICE MINISTER ZADOK AND MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO GALILI. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, MRS. RABIN WAS FORMALLY CHARGED IN THE TEL AVIV DISTRICT COURT APRIL 14 WITH POSSESSION OF FOREIGN CURRENCY; THE TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO BE HELD NEXT WEEK.

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 02668 151336Z

2. COMMENT: PRESSURE HAD BEEN GROWING ON RABIN AND ADVERSE PRESS COMMENT HAD BEEN INCREASING SINCE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE CABINET ON APRIL 12 THAT HE WOULD REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL A NEW GOVERNMENT WAS FORMED. COMMENTATORS ARGUED THAT IT WAS UNTENABLE FOR RABIN TO REMAIN AS PRIME MINISTER AFTER HAVING ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO

RESIGN AND HAVING SAID HE WOULD WITHDRAW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. LABOR PARTY COLLEAGUES PRESSED HIM TO LEAVE IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE PARTY'S SMOOTH TRANSITION OF POWER AND TO ENHANCE ITS IMAGE AS A UNITED PARTY FOR ELECTORAL PURPOSES.

3. MANY LABOR PARTY MEMBERS SAW RABIN'S EFFORT TO REMAIN IN OFFICE AS A DESIRE TO IMPEDE PERES IN HIS TAKEOVER OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP. HIS DEPARTURE WILL, THEREFORE, BE PERCEIVED AS SOMETHING OF A VICTORY FOR PERES WITHIN THE PARTY. THERE WAS ALSO THE VIEW THAT RABIN WISHED TO STAY IN OFFICE IN ORDER TO INCREASE HIS CHANCES OF A RETURN TO POWER. HE WILL BE NUMBER TWENTY ON THE ALIGNMENT ELECTION LIST AND THUS ASSURED OF A SEAT IN THE KNESSET. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT HE WILL BE READY TO CAPITALIZE ON ANY MISTAKE SHOULD PERES STUMBLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Sent Date: 15-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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